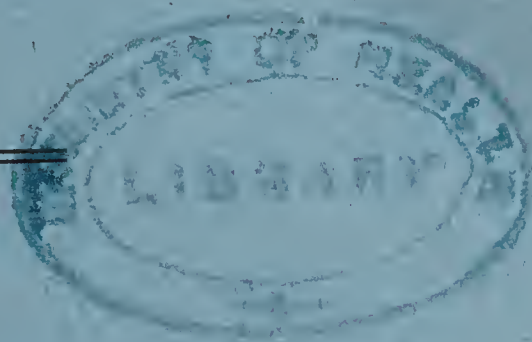


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Northwich Urban District Council.



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

For the Year ended 31st Dec., 1945

NORTHWICH
W. HOBSON & SON, PRINTERS.

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Northwich Urban District Council.

Health Report, 1945.

To the Chairman and Members of the Northwich
Urban District Council.

Madam and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit the following statement of essential matters affecting the Public Health of the Town during the year 1945.

Section A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,137 acres
Population	—	Registrar	General's	latest			
	estimate of population	...	...	...			18,130
Number of inhabited houses	(end of 1945)	...					5,457
Rateable value	(March 1946)	...	...				£124,427
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...					£491

The following extracts from vital statistics of the year relate to net births and deaths after correction for inward and outward transfers by the Registrar-General.

		Total.	M.	F.	
Live Births	{ Legitimate....	295	162	133	} Birth Rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population... 19·02
	{ Illegitimate ...	50	23	27	
Stillbirths	{ Legitimate ...	9	4	5	} Rate per 1000 total (live and still) births ... 25·42
	{ Illegitimate...	—	—	—	
Deaths...		218	141	107	Death Rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population ... 13·67

Deaths from puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List):—

	Deaths.	Rate per 1000 total (live and still) births.
No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis	... — ...	—
No. 30 Other puerperal causes	2 ...	5·64
Total	2 ...	5·64

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:—

All infants per 1,000 live births	60·86
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	64·40
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	40·00

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	32
„ „ Measles (all ages)	1
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	—
„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	3

The following table compares the main statistics for 1945 with those of the war years:—

	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.
Population	19,270	18,730	18,690	18,290	18,130	18,070	18,130
Birth Rate	14·16	14·89	15·14	15·14	18·42	17·43	19·02
Death Rate	12·76	14·48	11·28	11·31	12·18	14·27	13·67
Infant Death Rate ..	54·54	73·68	48·44	57·76	47·90	41·26	60·86
No. of Deaths from Cancer	39	32	28	33	32	40	32
No. of Deaths from Tuberculosis ..	10	16	13	9	7	13	8

CAUSES OF DEATH — 1945.

(Taken from the Registrar-General's Tables).

	MALES.	FEMALES	TOTAL.
1. Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever	—	—	—
2. Cerebro Spinal Fever	—	1	1
3. Scarlet Fever	—	—	—
4. Whooping Cough... ..	—	—	—
5. Diphtheria... ..	—	—	—
6. Tuberculosis of respiratory system	5	3	8
7. Other Tubercular Diseases	—	—	—
8. Syphilitic Diseases	—	—	—
9. Influenza	1	—	1
10. Measles	1	—	1
11. Ac. Polio-myel : and Polio-enceph :	—	—	—
12. Ac. : inf : enceph :	—	—	—
13. Cancer of B : cav : & oesoph (M) uterus (F)	2	1	3
14. Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	4	1	5
15. Cancer of Breast	—	4	4
16. Cancer of all other sites	12	8	20
17. Diabetes	1	1	2
18. Intra-cran : vasc : lesions	16	15	31
19. Heart Diseases	46	39	85
20. Other circulatory diseases	3	4	7
21. Bronchitis	4	—	4
22. Pneumonia :	8	6	14
23. Other Respiratory Diseases	1	2	3
24. Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	1	—	1
25. Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	2	1	3
26. Appendicitis	1	—	1
27. Other digestive diseases... ..	2	1	3
28. Nephritis	9	2	11
29. Puerperal Sepsis	—	—	—
30. Other Maternal Causes	—	2	2
31. Premature Birth	2	3	5
32. Congenital debility and Malformations	3	1	4
33. Suicide	—	3	3
34. Road Traffic Accidents	3	—	3
35. Other Violent Causes	—	—	—
36. All other Causes	14	9	23
	141	107	248

Section B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

No new or special provisions under this heading were made during 1945, but the Ambulance Service first inaugurated towards the end of 1944 was improved upon by the appointment of a second full-time driver and the purchase of a reserve ex-Civil Defence Ambulance. Up to January 1946, i.e., 76 weeks working of the Service, 572 patients from the Northwich Urban and adjoining Authorities, especially the residents of Northwich Rural District, shared in the benefits of this Service and the mileage covered in this period totalled just short of 20,000 miles. I would also like to record a more or less satisfactory mutual aid service which exists between the Winsford and Northwich Urban Ambulance Services whereby on occasions each Authority has helped the other in the provision of Ambulance transport.

Section C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.—During the year 2 samples of the Town's supply were examined by the County Analyst and were reported upon as follows:—

Result.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 20.11.45—Water from Hollins Hill Reservoir prior to chlorination. | “Water of a very satisfactory degree of organic purity and of wholesome bacteriological quality.” |
| 20.11.45—Water from a tap at 105, Middlewich Rd., Northwich, chlorinated. | “A well stabilised water of a very high degree of organic purity containing residual chlorine to the extent of 0.07 parts per million (tested on receipt of sample) and of thoroughly wholesome bacteriological quality.” |

As to the availability of the supply all the 5,457 houses of the Urban District are supplied by the Council's own public supply. This supply is "laid on" to the houses as follows:—

(1)	Into the house itself	...	...	...	5,176	houses
(2)	Into a wash-house, i.e. detached from the house	...	...	...	99	,,
(3)	By means of standpipes	...	...	...	182	,,
					—	
					5,457	,,
					—	

The Town's supply has no plumbo-solvent action and as a safeguard against bacterial contamination chlorination is regularly applied.

Swimming Baths.

A bacteriological examination of the water in the Town's Swimming Baths was taken in July, when the Public Health Laboratory, Manchester, reported the supply as satisfactory.

Drainage, Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

With regard to this Service, no new work of any magnitude has been carried out during the year. A report from the County Analyst on the effluent of the Wallerscote Joint Outfall Works dated February, 1944, reads:— "a good quality sewage effluent."

Closet Accommodation.

During the year the number of conversions to the water carriage system was 6 and the number of houses still on the conservancy system is 468. (see note on page 6).

Public Cleansing.

The routine work of refuse collection and disposal and the cleansing of pail closets, etc. proceeded satisfactorily throughout the year.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Statement of Inspections made and Notices Issued.

Nature of Inspections made	Num-ber.	Number of Notices served		Result of Services of Notices.			
		Statu-tory.	Infor-mal.	Notice compli-ed with	Remain-ing in hand.	Prosecutions.	
						Institu-ted.	Pend-ing.
1. Dwelling Houses, (general inspection)	680	2	148	126	24	..	..
2. Cellar Dwellings	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
3. Back-to-Back Houees	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
4. Tents' Vans, Sheds, etc. ..	60	I	12	13	..	I	..
5. Courts, Yards, Passages ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
*6. Pail Closets	468	..	26	26	..	..	..
7. Cesspools	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
8. House Drainage	50	..	50	50	..	..	..
9. Ditches, Watercourses, etc ..	2	..	2	2	..	..	..
10. Offensive Accumulations ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
11. Keeping of Animals	6	..	3	3	..	..	..
12. Offensive Trades	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
13. (a) Slaughterhouses (Public) ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
,, (Private)	30	..	..	..	..	..	..
(b) Other Places where food is produced or sold	272	..	12	12	..	..	..
14. Piggeries	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
15. (a) Dairies	32	..	I	I	..	..	..
(b) Cowsheds	12	..	I	I	..	..	..
(c) Milkshops	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
16. (a) Factories	24	..	2	2	..	..	..
(b) Workshops	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(c) Workplaces	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(d) Outworkers' Premises ..	I	..	..	..	..	..	..
17. Bakehouses (Overground) ..	56	..	8	8	..	..	..
,, (Underground)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
18. Common Lodging Houses ..	8	..	2	I	I	..	..
19. Houses let in Lodgings	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
20. Smoke Observations	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
21. Canal Boats	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
22. Infectious Disease Inquiries and Revisits	120	..	..	..	..	..	..
23. Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals	1831	3	267	245	25	I	..

* NOTE. The Council's *immediate* slum clearance programme includes at least 208 houses of the 468 previously mentioned as still on the conservancy system. There will, therefore, be an automatic and substantial reduction in the number of these insanitary fittings at an early date, and this will occur quite apart from the normal programme of conversions.

Section D.

HOUSING.

The number of houses visited during the course of the year by the Sanitary Inspectors was 680 and such urgent repairs as were found to be necessary were carried out.

3 houses were formally represented to the Council during the year as being in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation and all 3 have subsequently been closed and await demolition. Also informal representations to the Council's Post-War Reconstruction Committee have been made of houses which, in my opinion, should be dealt with under the Housing Act as "unfit" at the appropriate time. Since the survey of unfit houses first commenced in 1943 the Council's attention has been drawn to the following working-class properties:—

73	occupied houses in	Warrington Road area
19	„ „ „	Oldham's Hill area
7	„ „ „	Molyneux Place
14	„ „ „	Post Office Place
33	„ „ „	Tabley Street
16	„ „ „	The Market area
25	„ „ „	New Street
5	derelict „ „	New Street
192		

The above figures of houses provisionally regarded as unfit do not, of course, include those in the York Place — Whalley Road area.

As to the Council's post-war programme of new houses, the following sets out the progress made up to September, 1946.

- (a) 50 Temporary Bungalows in Dean Street were completed and fully occupied by January, 1946. Occupants were selected upon a "points" system and the inclusive rent charged is 15/1d. per week.
- (b) 74 Permanent Houses (3 bedroom type) on the Parkfield site. 40 of the 74 have a large living room and small kitchen and the remaining 34 have a large kitchen and small parlour. The first of these permanent houses on completion were occupied by families taken from condemned houses in the Whalley Road — York Place area in September, 1946. One interesting feature in the re-housing of the occupants of these condemned properties, is the

proposal to re-house in **one** of the new permanent houses the occupants of **three** condemned houses where the latter had single occupants only.

So has commenced what I hope will be an extensive programme of slum clearance and re-housing. Whilst this programme may take some years to complete, at least a sound post-war start has been made and a much needed health measure in the town initiated.

- (c) Other Council projects are the erection of 134 permanent houses in the Rudheath (part Urban, part Northwich Rural) area, for which Road works are now in hand, to be followed at a later date by the erection of a new Urban Estate in that part of the adjoining Rural District known as the Manor Park, Greenbank.

Section E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) Milk Supply.

During the year 59 samples of milk, being retailed in the area, were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory with the following results:—

- (1) **For the presence of living Tubercle Bacilli.**—These organisms were found in 4 out of the 27 samples submitted.

2 of the positive results were obtained in accredited milks and 2 in ordinary raw milks.

As a result 3 animals were slaughtered under the Tuberculosis Order, 1938.

- (2) **For Cleanliness Tests.**—Of the 32 samples submitted for these tests:—

12	samples of ungraded milk were satisfactory
2	“ “ “ “ “ barely satisfactory
2	“ “ “ “ “ unsatisfactory
6	“ “ pasteurised milk were satisfactory
3	“ “ “ “ “ part satisfactory
2	“ “ tuberculin-tested milk were satisfactory
1	“ “ “ “ “ was unsatisfactory
2	“ “ accredited milk were satisfactory
2	“ “ “ “ “ unsatisfactory

Appropriate action was taken in respect of all the unsatisfactory samples.

- (b) **Meat.**—Since the Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse in Northwich closed down on the 31st October, 1941, no slaughtering has taken place in the District.

The following, based upon a statement by the Meat Inspectors, is a summary of meat and other foods condemned during 1945:—

Ham	10 lbs.	Pork	83½ lbs.
Meat, Fish, Milk, etc.	680 tins	Bath Cakes	88
Crumpets	397	Tea Cakes	27
Meat Pies	266	Salad Dressing Powder	49 pkts.
Barley	40 lbs.	Semolina Pudding	
Chocolate	14 pkts.	Powder	21 pkts.
Cocoa	168 pkts.	Cake & Pudding	
Calf (1)	50 lbs.	Mixture	10 pkts.
Sponge Puddings	35	Fish Cakes	31 doz.
Sausages	129 lbs.	Tripe	50 lbs.
Bacon	80 lbs.	Cheese Trimmings	19 lbs.
Dates	170 lbs.	Fish	25 stone
Peaches	20 lbs.	Shredded Wheat	93 pkts.
Butter	1¼ lbs.	Kippers	7 lbs.

(c) **Other Foods.**

The inspection of premises in which other foods are prepared has been continued during the year and with a view to trying to limit the incidence of Food Poisoning, which since 1939 has been a notifiable disease, a circular letter was addressed in May, 1945, to all proprietors of food preparing premises, caterers, canteens, etc., in the Urban area, setting out the causes of Food Poisoning and the simple measures needed to limit its incidence. Possibly this was useful as no cases of this disease were notified during the year.

In particular the requirements of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, relating to Ice Cream premises, have been most carefully considered and in a review of the 16 premises holding a pre-war certificate of registration it was found that only 4 of the premises were dealing in Ice Cream during 1945. The unsatisfactory conditions prevailing at one of these 4 registered premises were found by the Council to justify the cancelling of the certificate of registration and the purveyor concerned has, for the time being, ceased production.

Section F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS
AND OTHER DISEASES.

- (1) The incidence of Infectious Diseases, other than Measles, was low and calls for no special comment. The 1 case of Diphtheria notified had not received protective treatment under the Council's Scheme but had, I believe, received such treatment by her own Doctor some 5 years previously; she made a satisfactory recovery at the Davenham Isolation Hospital.

Incidence of Infectious Diseases (other than Tuberculosis), during the year 1945.

DISEASES.	Total Cases Notified	Cases Admitted to Hospital	TOTAL DEATHS
Scarlet Fever	20	20	—
Diphtheria	1	1	—
Pneumonia	6	2	—
Erysipelas	4	1	—
Measles	101	3	1
Whooping Cough	14	—	—
Dysentery	1	—	—
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	—	1 (Manchester Hospital)	1

Specimens submitted for Bacteriological Examination.

Examined for.	Number submitted	Result.	
		Positive	Negative
Diphtheria Bacilli	40	2	38
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	1	1	—
Salmonella Group	2	1	1
Hæmolytic Streptococci	1	—	1

(2) TUBERCULOSIS.

The table below details the ages of both new cases and deaths from both forms of Tuberculosis.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1945.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year ...	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
1- 5 years ...	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
5-15 „ ...	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
15-25 „ ...	1	1	1	2	1	—	—	—
25-35 „ ...	4	1	—	—	1	2	—	—
35-45 „ ...	4	3	—	1	1	—	—	—
45-55 „ ...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
55-65 „ ...	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
65 and upwards ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS ...	12	6	1	6	5	3	—	—

Number of patients on register at 31st December, 1944 — 185.

Number of patients on register at 31st December, 1945 — 182.

75 Sputum specimens were examined at the County Council's Laboratory during the year; 9 being reported on as positive.

The Council during the year had their attention drawn to the increased incidence of Tuberculosis in the Town and they noted how our rates compared unfavourably with those for the Cheshire County as a whole. I think the Urban Council appreciated that, whilst they as a Body could do little about some of the conditions which predispose persons to Tuberculosis, they could, in time, improve matters by working on the following lines:—

- (1) By a really vigorous post-war re-housing programme, the selection of the sites for which should allow the maximum amount of clean air circulating freely, and unsoiled with pollution from gas and chemical works, engine sheds, tips, fouled rivers and the like.

- (2) The provision of more Recreational Grounds.
- (3) By encouraging, as far as possible, the consumption in their area of either Tuberculin-Tested or Heat Treated milks (our 1945 records showed that of 27 samples of milk taken in the Urban area and examined specially at the Laboratory for the presence of living Tubercle Bacilli, 4 of them or 14.8% gave positive results).

I am glad to be able to record that steps in all these three directions have been, or are now being, taken namely:—

- (a) By the transfer to the new permanent houses at Parkfield of the tenants of the condemned Whalley Road — York Place properties where statistics had shown that the incidence of Tuberculosis and Scabies was higher than in other parts of the town, and by the selection of further new housing sites with recreational fields in the Rudheath — Shurlach — Greenbank areas well away from the main industrial activities of the Town.
- (b) By the recent Council's decision to provide children's playing fields in Lostock, Dean Street and Queen Street areas and at "The Ley," Winnington.
- (c) By the steady increase in the local consumption of Tuberculin-Tested and Heat Treated Milks.

(3) DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

During 1941 — 1945 the progress made in the Urban area under the Diphtheria Immunisation Scheme, which was commenced jointly in 1941 through the Joint M.O.H. Committee, can be gathered from the following figures:—

	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.
Percentage of Children treated between 0-4 years of age inclusive...	25.9%	35.7%	41.5%	44.8%	42.5%
Percentage of Children treated between 5-14 years of age inclusive ...	83.4%	92.2%	78.1%	78.5%	79.8%

The total number of children known definitely to have received protective treatment in the Northwich Urban area up to December, 1945, was 3,671 to which may be added an estimate of 137 children dealt with privately through their own Doctors. In addition 195 children have received "booster" injections.

A certain number of children, whose parents prefer it, receive the treatment privately through their own Doctors to whom the Ministry of Health's free supply of prophylactics is made available for this purpose. I have no exact knowledge of the numbers of all the children dealt with in this way so the percentages recorded above do not now include them.

Also thanks to closer co-operation in this work of immunisation with the County Council, as the Maternity and Child Welfare Authority for the area, the slight setback in the percentages of "under fives" recorded above in 1945 will, I think, be remedied when the current year's figures come to be worked out.

(4) **SCABIES AND VERMINOUS INFESTATION.**

The arrangements made in 1942 through the Joint M.O.H. Committee for the treatment of Scabies and Pediculosis patients worked very satisfactorily during 1945.

The steady reduction in the incidence of Scabies since 1942 can be gathered from the following:—

	1942	1943	1944	1945
Cases of Scabies	684	376	222	157
Cases of Pediculosis	46	36	15	7
Total	730	412	237	164
Number of House-				
holds involved	212	156	116	88

Towards the end of the year D.D.T. Prythrum Powder was used for the first time in the disinfection of clothing, etc., of Pediculosis patients.

The practice of home disinfection in cases of Infectious Diseases (including Tuberculosis) and the eradication of vermin was continued during the year. All the Schools in the Town were disinfected at least once during the year and 74 houses were disinfested for the purpose of eradicating vermin. In particular the arrangements made for the disinfection of mattresses and bedding of Tuberculosis cases have been "tightened up" and full use of the steam disinfector at the Davenham Isolation Hospital has been made during the year.

I would like to say in closing this report how much I appreciate the help I have received from the Members of the Council and Officials in dealing with the various matters which have arisen during the year.

W. S. SLATER, M.B., M.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.

October, 1946.

